

Message Text

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60

ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SAB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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APPROVED BY ARA/PAN:SMBELL

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS STATE 236975

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON BOYD STATEMENT

THE FOLLOWING Q & A WAS PREPARED FOR TODAY'S STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING. IT WAS CLEARED BY DAVID LAZAR, AMBASSADOR BUNKER AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY SHLAUDEMAN:

Q: WOULD YOU COMMENT ON THE CHARGE REPORTED IN TODAY'S WASHINGTON POST, QUOTING THE PANAMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS DELIBERATELY SLOWED DOWN NEGOTIATIONS IN ORDER TO PROVOKE AN INCIDENT?

A: WE HAVE TROUBLE BELIEVING THAT FOREIGN MINISTER BOYD WAS QUOTED ACCURATELY. CLEARLY, A SUGGESTION THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD SEEK TURMOIL ABROAD FOR POLITICAL ADVANTAGE AT HOME IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE. WE HAVE ALREADY BROUGHT THIS STORY TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PANAMANIAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN WASHINGTON AND REQUESTED AN IMMEDIATE CLARIFICATION. OUR AMBASSADOR IN PANAMA CITY IS DOING SIMILARLY. AT THIS UNCLASSIFIED

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POINT I WOULD ONLY REITERATE THE UNITED STATES' COMMITMENT

TO CONCLUDE AN EQUITABLE NEW TREATY WITH PANAMA. NO
QUESTION WAS ASKED. KISSINGER

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